

Mr. WOLF. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, I rise to engage in a colloquy with the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), the chairman of the subcommittee, and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER) on an important issue regarding democracy in Venezuela.

Mr. Chairman, 2 weeks ago, several Members of Congress went to Venezuela and heard about the intimidation by the Venezuelan Government of a democracy advocate named Maria Corina Machado. Ms. Machado is the leader of Sumate, a Venezuelan non-governmental electoral watchdog. Currently, she is charged by the Venezuelan Government for accepting illicit foreign financial contributions from our own National Endowment For Democracy.

Recently, Ms. Machado was invited to the White House to see the President and share her concerns about the endangered state of democracy in Venezuela. This Congress should stand behind Ms. Machado and support the growth of democracy in Venezuela.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS).

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOLF. I yield to the gentleman from Maryland.

Mr. RUPPERSBERGER. Mr. Chairman, I concur with the gentleman's interpretation of the difficult situation in Venezuela. Sumate has been one Venezuelan institution that has been willing and able to monitor the anti-democratic behavior of the Venezuelan Government. It has been able to bring the attention of the world to the decline in democracy in that country.

Mr. Chairman, this Congress should be supporting democratic institutions in Venezuela and those individuals fighting on the side of democracy. Does the gentleman from Virginia agree?

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I do. I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER) for their statements and leadership.

I think by their speaking today it sends a message to the world with regard to the importance of us promoting democracy and freedom in Venezuela. Democracy and human rights, whether it be in Venezuela or any place else, are basic fundamental freedoms that must always be preserved and supported.

The United States should always stand with those fighting for those freedoms. The United States should continue to send a clear message to everyone that we will stand with people like Ms. Machado and others like her who speak out for democracy.

I think what the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. TOM DAVIS) and the gentleman from Maryland (Mr. RUPPERSBERGER) have done is send a message to the world. They have sent a message to the National Endowment

For Democracy that when there is another grant application, that application should be met so she has that opportunity for freedom.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. WOLF. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. TOM DAVIS of Virginia. Mr. Chairman, moving to one other matter, it is my understanding that the 2006 Science, State, Justice and Commerce Appropriations bill requires agencies to notify the Committee on Appropriations 15 days before funds are reprogrammed to implement e-government initiatives.

As the chairman of the authorizing committee with jurisdiction over the E-Government Act, and in fact I was one of the authors of the E-Government Act, I would ask the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) if he will share information that he obtains with the Committee on Government Reform on the funding and implementation of e-government initiatives in this bill so we could be so advised.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, yes, I would be happy to provide the Committee on Government Reform with information received from the administration regarding e-government initiatives.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. CHOCOLA
Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment No. 1 offered by Mr. CHOCOLA:
Page 108, after line 7, insert the following:
TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 801. None of the funds made available by this Act may be used by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration to employ any individual under the title "artist in residence".

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of June 14, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA).

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) for his good work on this bill. I also appreciate the opportunity to offer this amendment.

This amendment is really about prioritizing spending and fiscal responsibility. Over the last 2 years, NASA has spent \$20,000 for an artist-in-residence program. My amendment is designed to prevent or limit that practice in the future.

Mr. Chairman, nowhere in NASA's mission does it say anything about advancing fine arts or hiring a performance artist. In fact, Laurie Anderson, the person that was chosen to perform the role of a performance artist, when she was called to be offered the job, she said, Sure, what do I do?

And the response she got from NASA was, Well, we do not know; we have never done this before.

One of the first things that I did in 2003 after I showed up as a new Member of Congress is I attended a memorial service for the Columbia astronauts. Certainly, spending money by NASA on a performance artist and a artist-in-residence program does nothing to make sure that the shuttle program gets back into space and prevents such tragedies in the future.

Now \$20,000 may not seem like much in the Halls of Congress; but to the average American family, it is a significant amount of money. I wish I could say that NASA is boldly wasting taxpayer money where no agency has wasted it before, but I am afraid that the artist-in-residence program is just a symptom of a bigger problem.

Recently, the Heritage Foundation identified \$386 billion of waste, fraud, and abuse in government spending. Every American business and every American family must make hard decisions to stand by their budget and eliminate wasteful funding, and the Federal Government should be no different and NASA should not be spending taxpayer dollars on a performance artist. I encourage all of my colleagues to support this amendment.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. CHOCOLA. I yield to the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I think this is a good amendment and I accept it.

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MOLLOHAN. Mr. Chairman, I move to strike the last word.

Mr. Chairman, I rise not in opposition, I am going to agree to the amendment, but I would like to have some comment before I do.

Mr. Chairman, I think this is a regrettable amendment for a number of reasons.

First of all, it involves an awfully little bit of money. Secondly, I think it sends a really bad signal. Indeed, one of NASA's missions is to inspire; and it has had an arts program, a very small arts program since 1962. Such luminaries as Norman Rockwell have participated in it over the years.

It is in furtherance of part of NASA's mission. NASA's mission is to inspire, to educate. Indeed, in the education theme of NASA's FY 2006 budget, it states: "To develop the next generation of explorers, NASA must do its part to inspire and motivate students to pursue careers in science and technology and engineering and in mathematics."

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A part of it is connectivity. One of the ways NASA has done that, if anyone has visited its facilities, is through beautiful murals and other art initiatives. This particular initiative that the gentleman is speaking to is the appointment of Laurie Anderson as an

artist-in-residence, which is another phase, if you will, in NASA's arts program. It is a worthy program. It has developed over those years since 1962 an awful lot of memorable artworks. There is no reason to believe that this initiative, which is so modest in nature, would do anything but further enhance the arts program at NASA. Again, it is so small that it is just minuscule. I am afraid the amendment really represents more art bashing than it does good fiscal policy.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Chairman, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. MOLLOHAN. I yield to the gentlewoman from Texas.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. As a member of the Committee on Science, might I just say to the gentleman, he could not be more correct as relates to a tool of inspiration. Let me also emphasize that the Committee on Science works in a bipartisan way on education, helping to educate young people or encourage young people to participate or to be interested in math and science.

One of the key issues happens to be girls in math and science and for them to be unafraid of those disciplines. This kind of inspirational film that was first shown internationally and then shown nationally is the kind of very small investment that seeks to inspire similarly as young people were inspired in the 1960s, led by President John F. Kennedy and Camelot, speaking about our ability to travel into space.

I am disappointed that we would focus \$20,000 on this very positive effort. I would hope that we would think of this in a different manner. I would hope that boys and girls and young people across America who are deciding to go into the sciences and get graduate degrees and Ph.D.s and might, I say particularly those in the Hispanic and African American community, which we work on in a bipartisan way on the Science Committee, Historically Black Colleges, Hispanic-serving institutions, I would hope that they would still have an opportunity to see an inspiring film such as this one, and that NASA would not be limited from investing in educational projects that will generate millions of dollars in research and opportunity for our youth.

Mr. CHOCOLA. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, this is not an art-bashing amendment. Nothing could be further from the truth. It is simply a fiscal responsibility amendment. We must make decisions on how to prioritize spending. NASA will continue to have an art program. They have an art curator. They have an education program with a chief education officer. The ability to communicate the mission of NASA and the benefits of space exploration are still intact fully. But we have to make hard decisions. Having an artist-in-residence that produces a play that has minimal, if any, relationship to NASA and the

mission of NASA is not wise spending of taxpayer dollars.

I appreciate the chairman's support of this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIRMAN. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. CHOCOLA).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT OFFERED BY MRS. JONES OF OHIO

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I offer an amendment.

The CHAIRMAN. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Amendment offered by Mrs. JONES of Ohio: Page 108, after line 7, insert the following title:

TITLE VIII—ADDITIONAL GENERAL PROVISIONS

SEC. 801. None of the funds made available in this Act may be used to close or consolidate any office of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission or to make any reductions in the number of full-time officers or employees in any such office, or to reduce the number of full-time officers or employees serving as supervisors, management officials, mediators, examiners, investigators, or attorneys in such office, as part of any workforce repositioning, restructuring, or reorganizing of the Commission that is authorized under law.

The CHAIRMAN. Pursuant to the order of the House of June 14, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF) each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES).

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First of all, I want to thank the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS) for cosponsoring this amendment. Our amendment deals with the issue of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. I am a former trial lawyer for the EEOC and also want to add the name of the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) as a supporter of this amendment. She would be here, but she had another piece of legislation to work on.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPS).

Mrs. CAPPS. I thank my good colleague from Ohio for yielding me this time.

Mr. Chairman, for 40 years the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission has been charged with ensuring that all citizens get a fair shot in the workplace, but now the Chair of the Commission is pushing a reorganization plan which may seriously compromise the agency's ability to protect employees from discrimination. This plan has had neither hearing nor review by this body. Nevertheless, the administration proposal is that many offices will be downgraded while others will experience an increase in jurisdiction and workload without a comparable increase in staff. This is in addition to an

already growing backlog of cases which have yet to be investigated.

Mr. Chairman, I wish I could say that since the passage of employment anti-discrimination laws that discrimination has been eliminated in the workplace, but the truth is discrimination still exists. Job applicants are all too frequently judged on the basis of their skin color. Women are still subjected to sexual harassment. Persons with disabilities are passed over for employment even when they have the necessary skills.

I hope my colleagues will join me in voting in favor of the Jones-Capps amendment so that we can ensure that our constituents will continue to find a resource available to them which will protect them from discrimination in the workplace.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I can assure the gentlewoman that the committee has been closely following EEOC's plan to reorganize over the last 3 years. The committee has even asked the Government Accountability Office to evaluate EEOC's proposals to reposition the agency with a particular focus on the National Contact Center pilot project. I just asked the staff. GAO has not come back yet, and they are not late. We just asked them to do this last year.

Also we have language in the bill on page 78 that says, "Provided further, That the Commission may take no action to implement any workforce repositioning, restructuring, or reorganization until such time as the Committees on Appropriations have been notified of such proposals in accordance with the reprogramming provisions of section 605 of this act."

The gentleman from West Virginia and myself would look at that before they could go ahead. It really does, though, unnecessarily restrict the agency's ability to restructure. We will be glad to work with the gentlewoman and listen to her, but I think just to accept this amendment now would really be wrong, particularly with the language that we currently have in this bill that provides that the Committee on Appropriations can stop any reorganization, or they have to come up to the committee before they move ahead.

I oppose the amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. JONES of Ohio. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman from Virginia so much for the support he has given me with regard to repositioning of the EEOC, but the issue is so important to the people that I represent that I must continue to argue my amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. WATT), the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Mr. WATT. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentlewoman for yielding me this time.

In the Congressional Black Caucus' agenda that we rolled out on January